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EAST TIMOR:

A PEOPLE SHATTERED BY LIES AND SILENCE

SUMMARY

1- At the East Timor scale, it's a veritable holocaust, with more than 40% of the whole people eliminated during the first six years of the occupation.
2- An annexation in the name of regional stability and defence of the Free World, in a moment of panic motivated by the Soviet expansionism.
3- The oil and other economic interests and even religious factors also influenced the process.
4- Twenty years later, instead of working in order to put an end to the dramatic consequences of their errors many politicians try to keep them under the shadow of lies.
5- In reality, East Timor was occupied by the United States, Australia, United Kingdom, The Vatican, Japan and other powers, through Indonesia. Indonesia was not much more than an executor of a policy that interested the West.
6- Portugal initiated a process of decolonisation that supposed a consultation of the Timorese people, but Indonesia succeeded in interrupting it.
7- The relative abandon of Portugal and the comparison with the position of Spain towards Western Sahara.
8- Facing all interests and forces involved, the actors in the field - both Timorese and Portuguese - were not much more than mere figurines.
9- It was based in lies that Indonesia created the instability and prepared the invasion.
10- In order to make sure that those lies would not be exposed, the indonesian regime did not hesitate to murder all the journalist present in the territory, and the government of the western powers silenced those crimes.
11- In order to assure a complete silence, also the international humanitarian agencies were forbidden to enter in the territory.
12- With the help of the Australian Government who captured the only retransmission radio that, from the Northern Territory, communicated with the Timorese Resistance, the information black out was almost complete during thirteen long years.
13- With no information on the Media, governments of the occupying powers and theirs representatives could lie freely.
14- With the public opinion asleep, even the Media lost interest in the question : East Timor, no one even knows where that is... East Timor does not sell... East Timor is not news...
15- The courage and the intelligence of some newsmen prevented the Santa Cruz massacre to be another ignored and forgotten massacre.
16- To report what goes on in East Timor and to demand responsabilities to the governments for the murder of journalists, the sales of arms and the polical coverage they give to the occupying power are some of the ways to defend not only the Timorese but also Freedom itself and the international law.

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and

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1 -AT THE EAST TIMOR SCALE, IT IS A VERITABLE HOLOCAUST,WITH MORE THAN 40 % OF THE WHOLE PEOPLE ELIMATED DURING THE FIRST SIX YEARS OF OCCUPATION.

Twenty years after the invasion, and as a consequence of the Indonesian occupation, the martyred people of East Timor suffered the greatest genocide registered in the XXth century.

Several authors mention a number of two hundred thousand dead, others whilst others, taking into consideration the decline in the population registered in the first four years of the occupation, refer two hundred and fifty thousand dead in East Timor. Yet, they forget that the demographic statistics pointed out an increase of the population of 2,2% per year, at the beginning of the seventies.

Gabriel Defert was, in our opinion, the specialist who best managed to study the several statistic data available either from the Portuguese and Indonesian authorities and from the Catholic Church statistics. He concluded in his book *" Timor Est le Genocide Oublié"* (1) that, even admitting that the rate of natural growth could have been reduced in a half during the first six years of occupation, between December 1975 and December 1981, an average of 308.000 Timorese would have lost their lives. This represents 44% of the population (696 000 inhabitants) in the territory before the invasion.

Curiously the Indonesian professor George Aditjondro, from Salatiga University, in the island of Java, based on the Indonesian Army data, concluded, just as Gabriel Defert, that three hundred thousand Timorese would have had "disappeared" in the first years that followed the invasion.(2)

Between 1983 and 1995 some several thousand Timorese have perished, therefore the total death toll will naturaly surpass the figure of 308.000 dead.

Not even the Nazi Holocaust, perpetuated against the Jewish people between 1939 and 1945, managed to reach such a high percentage of people. The five million Jews murdered under the Nazism correspond, according to professor Cecil Roth (3), from the University of Bar-Ilan, in Israel, to a third (33%) of the total number of Jewish people in the world, a percentage fairly behind the Maubere holocaust...

It strikes us to notice how a genocide of such dimension could pass unnoticed by the public world opinion. It was precisely the lack of knowledge of such reality and the information black out that contributed the most to the intolerable proportions of the East Timor drama.

The enclosed figure permits its comparison with other wars, either in absolute and relative terms, and gives us the real dimension of a drama that, at the East Timorese population scale, surpasses, by far, the percentage of dead in the Vietnam war, Biafra, Bosnia, Poland (the most martyred nation in the Second World War) or even of Cambodia under the regime of the Khmer Rouge of Pol Pot.

HUMAN LOSSES AS CONSEQUENCE OF WARS (estimates)

Countries or People	Year	Number of people killed	Population at the beginning of the conflit	Percentage of people dead direct our indirectly
East Timor (Indonesian Occupation) (1) (2)	1975-1995	> 308.000	696.000	> 44%
Jewish People (Nazism, II Word War) (3)	1939-1945	5.250.000	15.750.000	33%
Cambodia (USA,1970-75 Khmers Rouge 75-79)	1970-1979	2.000.000	7.000.000	28,5% (1) (1)=(2)+(3)
Angola (Civil War) (18)	1975-1995	1.500.000	6.500.000	23%
North Corea (USA+South Corea+UN)	1950-1953	1.500.000	8.000.000	19%
Poland (II Word War) (16) (German occupation, Nazism) (17)	1939-1945	6.000.000	33.000.000	18%
Cambodia (Khmers Rouge, 1975-79)	1975-1979	1.200.000	7.000.000	17,1% (2)
Biafra (Secession) (Nigeria)	1967-1970	1.500.000	10.000.000	15%
Soviet Union USSR (German invasion,Nazism) (16) (17)	1939-1945	26.600.000	190.000.000	14%
East Timor (II WW) (Japanese Occupation)	1942-1945	65.000	480.000	13,5%
Cambodia (USA, 1970-75)	1970-1975	800.000	7.000.000	11,4% (3)
Yugoslavia (II WW) (Germany, Nazism) (16) (17)	1939-1945	1.500.000	14.000.000	10,6%
Rwanda (Civil War between Hutu and Tutsi) (19)	1994	800.000	8.000.000	10%%
Germany (II WW) (Nazism + GB + Allies) (16) (17)	1939-1945	6.000.000	75.000.000	8%
Mozambique (Civil War) (20)	1975-1994	700.000	9.500.000	7,4%
Greece (II WW) (Germany, Nazism) (16) (17)	1939-1945	460.000	6.570.000	7%
Afganistan (USSR occupation)	1979-1984	1.000.000	16.000.000	6,3%
Vietnam (USA)	1960-1975	2.000.000	40.000.000	5%
South Korea (North Korea + China)	1950-1953	1.000.000	20.000.000	5%
Bosnia (Ex-Yugoslavia) (Serbs, Croates)(20)	1992-1995	200.000	4.200.000	4,8%
Japan (II WW) (USA + Allies) (16) (17)	1941-1945	2.630.000	58.500.000	4,5%
Netherlands (II WW) (Germany, Nazism) (16) (17)	1939-1945	240.000	8.000.000	3%
Iran (Iraq)	1980-1988	1.200.000	45.000.000	2,7%
Romania (Germany, Nazism) (16) (17)	1939-1945	460.000	18.500.000	2,5%
China (Civil War)	1945-1949	12.000.000	550.000.000	2,2%

2 - AN ANNEXATION IN THE NAME OF REGIONAL STABILITY AND DEFENCE OF THE FREE WORLD, IN A MOMENT OF PANIC MOTIVATED BY THE SOVIET EXPANSIONISM

The international political situation, in 1975, was undoubtedly different from the one we have today. We were then fully living the Cold War between the two superpowers, the United States of America and the Soviet Union.

Besides this, in that same year, Communism had an immense advance, either in Africa (Ethiopia, Angola, Mozambique, etc.) and, most particularly, in Indochina. The fall of the pro-American regime of Lon Nol, in Cambodia, in 17 April 1975, with the correspondent arrival to power of the Kmers Rouge, the taking over by the Pathet Lao communists, with the expel of the American "advisers" from Laos that same month, and, above all, the fall of Saigon into the hands of the Vietnamese communists on 30 April 1975, left the West in panic.

The images of the sudden departure of the American Embassy in Saigon are the symbol of the defeat of the West against a Soviet expansionism forwardthat seemed, at the time, impossible to stop.

In this geopolitical context, analysed by the world strategists in the context of the "Domino Theory" according to which the fall of a peace would drag along the falling of the following, and so on. Indonesia seemed to be one of the principal, if not the only, mark to stop this advance, in catadupa, of the Soviet expansionism, and to defend therefore the "Free World".

In addition to this, the American nuclear submarines, in order to escape being detected by the Soviet inteligence services, needed to use the deep waters around the North of East Timor, where Indonesia authorised the passage.

It is in this context, that the support given by the American Government and other Western Governments to the invasion and annexation of East Timor by the Indonesian forces has to be analysed. Even if there were only a few Timorese communists, there was still the fear that a communist regime might become possible in the island. And a second Cuba - this time in the Asian Southeast - could affect the regional stability and become dangerous for the geostrategical interests of the West.

This situation is clearly expressed in a telegram dated of 21st July 1975, in the sequence of a visit to East Timor of a notable member of the British Foreign Office (Gordon Duggan) :

"(...)*it is in Britain's interest that Indonesia should absorb the territory as soon and as unobtrusively as possible; and that if it comes to the crunch and there is a row in the United Nations we should keep our heads down and avoid siding against the Indonesian Government*".

3 - THE OIL AND OTHER ECONOMIC INTERESTS AND EVEN RELIGIOUS FACTORS ALSO INFLUENCED THE PROCESS.

As for Australia, with its fifteen million inhabitants, apart from wanting to maintain good relations with its super-populated neighbour, Indonesia (with almost ten times more inhabitants), it was also interested in the oil that was already known to exist in the Timor Sea. The demarcation of the territorial waters was already being discussed with the Portuguese Government, but Australia was not pleased with the results. In accordance to this, the Australian Ambassador in Jakarta did not forget to remind his government, by a telegram dated of 17 August 1975:

(...) " *I wonder whether the (Australian) government is aware of the interest of the Ministry of Minerals and Energy in the Timor situation. It seems to me that this department might well have an interest in filling the gap in the agreement on maritime boarders, and this would be more easily negotiable with Indonesia by closing the present than gap with Portugal or independent Portuguese Timor". (4)*

The Indonesian Christians of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Jakarta were General Suharto's principal advisers for the annexation. Representing the Catholics only 3% of the population of that country with 87% of Muslims (6% are Protestants and 4% have other religions), the annexation of one island with a high percentage of Catholics could mean a reinforcement of the Christian minority. Besides contributing to the expansion of Indonesia, the Christian minority would prove their nationalist commitment and justify the social preponderance that it held in the Suharto regime.

This position of the prominent Indonesian Catholics - among which was General Benny Murdani - was shared by a great number of Bishops and by the Apostolic Nuncio in Indonesia, to whom the continuity and reinforcement of the small catholic minority in the biggest Muslim nation of the World, was of crucial importance.

The Vatican itself was so much commited in having good relations with the Indonesian Government that when, in 1989, more than one hundred catholic Bishops from Europe, Africa and america have subscribed letters addressed to the Secretary General of the United Nations in support of the Bishop's Belo proposal for a referendum in East Timor, those letters have been retained under the order of the State Secretary of the Vatican, Cardinal Agostino Casarolli, and have never been sent to the United Nations.

4 - TWENTY YEARS LATER INSTEAD OF WORKING IN ORDER TO PUT AN END TO THE DRAMATIC CONSEQUENCES OF THEIR ERRORS MANY POLITICIANS TRY TO KEEP THEM UNDER THE SHADOW OF LIES.

Today it became clear for many people, including politicians in Australia, USA and even Indonesia, that the invasion of East Timor has been not only a tremendous disaster for its people, but also a terrible political mistake. No one among the world political leaders imagined that twenty years later the People of East Timor would still resist and that the problem would be there like a gravel in Jakarta 's shoes.

Although this became an increasingly embarrassing problem for Indonesia itself, conditioning its political modernization and affecting its international image, many politicians prefer to forget the issue by hiding it and the role they played in the drama under the shadow of lies.

An example of this has been, for instance, the presentation by Dr. Henry Kissinger, ex-United States Secretary of State, of his own book, "Diplomacy" in New York on July 11, 1995. He did not say one single word on East Timor in his prepared talk.

But Constâncio Pinto, former head of the underground Timorese Resistance, arrested and tortured in captivity and now living in the United States of America, asked him about his visit to Jakarta with President Ford, just a day before the invasion took place.

"*Timor was never discussed with us when we were in Indonesia* ", replied Kissinger who added " *At the airport, as we were leaving, the Indonesians told us that they were going to occupy the Portuguese colony of Timor. To us that did not seem like a very significant event because the Indians had occupied the Portuguese colony of Goa ten years earlier and to us it looked like another process of decolonisation (...) so, when the Indonesians informed us, we neither said yes or no, we were literally at the airport.*"

In the room was also present Allan Nairn, an American journalist that had been hardly beaten by the indonesian soldiers while other soldiers killed more than two hundred Timorese demonstrators in Santa Cruz, Dili, in 1991.

Allan Nairn : *" Mr Kissinger, my name is Allan Nairn. I'm one of the American who survived the massacre in East Timor on November , 12,1991. Now you just said that in your meeting with Suharto on the afternoon of December 6, 1975, you did not discuss Timor until you came to the airport. Well, I have here the official State Departement transcript of your and President Ford's Conversation with General Suharto. It's clear from the portion of the text that was released that you did discuss the inpending invasion of Timor with Suharto. President Ford told me that you and President Ford together gave US approval for the invasion of East Timor. There is another internal memo of a December 18, 1975 meeting held at the State Department right after your return from that trip and you were berating your staff for having put on paper a finding by legal advisor Mr Li, that Indonesian invasion of East Timor violated international law and violated a treaty with the US because US weapons were used. It's clear from this transcript that you were angry at them first because you were feared this memo would leak and second because you were supporting the invasion and you did not want it known that you were doing the contrary to the advice of your own people. If one looks at the public actions, 16 hours after you left that meeting with Suharto, the Indonesians troops began parachuting over Dili, the capital of East Timor..."*

Kissinger : *"Look, I think we all got the point now"*

Nairn : *"My question, Dr. Kissinger, is two fold : First will you give a waiver under the privacy act to support full declassification of this memo so we can see exactly what you and President Ford said to Suharto ? Secondly, would you support the convening of an international war crimes tribunal under UN supervision on the subject of East Timor and would you agree to abide by its verdict in regard to your own conduct ?"*

Kissinger : *"I mean , uh, really, this sort of comments is one of the reasons why the conduct of the foreign policy is becoming nearly impossoble under these conditions. Here is a fellow who´s got one obsession, he´s got one problem, he collects a bunch of documents, you don´t know what is in these documents...*

"The fact is essencially as I described them (thumping podium) Timor was not a significant American policy problem if Suharto raised it, if Ford said something, that sounded encouraging, it was not significant american foreign policy problem. It seemed to us to be an anti-colonial problem in which the Indonesians were taking over Timor and we had absolutely no reason at that time to pay any huge attention to it.

" Secondly, you have to understand theses things in the context of the period Vietnam had just collapsed. Nobody yet knew what effect the domino theory would have: Indonesia was a key country in Southeast Asia. We were not looking for trouble with Indonesia. And the reason I objected in the State Department to putting this thing on paper : it was garanteed then to lead to some public confrontation and fundamental position on these Human Rights issues was always to try to discuss them first, quietly, before they turned into a public confrontation." (21)

5 - IN REALITY, EAST TIMOR WAS OCCUPIED BY THE UNITED STATES, AUSTRALIA, UNITED KINGDOM, THE VATICAN, JAPAN AND OTHER POWERS, THROUGH INDONESIA. INDONESIA WAS NOT MUCH MORE THAN AN EXECUTOR OF A POLICY THAT INTERESTED THE WEST...

Being at that time the fifth nation in the world in terms of population (with the extinction of the Soviet Union, it is now the 4th) and in a period of fast economic expansion (around 7% of annual growth of the internal product), Indonesia was a desired commercial

partner by the industrialised countries, exporters of manufactured goods and importers of raw materials.

Suharto, who arrived to power with the Western support and the Soviet compliance after crushing more than half a million members and supporters of the Indonesian Communist Party (pro-Chinese), knew that the International support was indispensable to develop the country economy. That is why he was so careful as to auscultate, in the first place, the governors of the most important nations.

It was only after visiting the United States, Canada, Japan (the main investor in Indonesia), Iran (important Muslim country) and Yugoslavia (founder of the Non Aligned Movement) and assuring himself of their support to the annexation, that General Shuarto started to affirm, in public, that the Independence of East Timor would not be accepted. Only at this time (July 1975), did he give green light to the hawks of the regime to create instability in the territory and prepare the annexation by force. (6)

Taking into account the political and diplomatic support that the mentioned States gave to the Indonesian Government and the supply of planes and other war equipment used to fight the Timorese Resistance and the covering up that they did of the crimes committed against the People of East Timor, we can say that it were the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, Vatican, Japan and other powers who invaded and occupied the territory through the Indonesian intermediary. The Soldiers were Indonesian but the interests and the support were mainly those of the Western powers. Only the fact of being "their own war" can explain so much support, so much connivance, so much silence and so many lies, from the representatives of the Western governments (and also the relative silence of the Soviet Union and its satellites), as we will see next. After all, the Indonesian Government itself was not much more than the peon that, in the world geopolitical chess, the Western played against the International Communism in the defence of the interests, either global or specific of each state.

5 - PORTUGAL INITIATED A PROCESS OF DECOLONISATION THAT SUPPOSED A CONSULTATION OF THE TIMORESE PEOPLE, BUT INDONESIA SUCCEEDED IN INTERRUPTING IT.

The tiredness of more than a dozen years of war in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau, and the victories achieved by the several Liberation Movements, made impossible the development of a progressive pedagogy of genuine decolonization based on a Referendum consultation to the native peoples of the mentioned African Countries.

Exceptionally, in East Timor the absence of any sort of armed resistance, made it predictable that it would be possible to achieve, in the island, a proper decolonization through the direct consultation of the people involved after a preparatory period of some years.

The setting up, immediatly after the Portuguese Revolution of 25 April 1974, of Timorese political associations, based on the freedom of expression assembly and organisation, and their consultation by the regional government was a step in that direction. The setting up of a first democratic experience, with the election of regional administrative bodies in the county of Lautem through secret and universal vote of the adult people of the area, was another important step. Western journalists and diplomats followed the process and could verify its legitimacy as well as the massive participation of the local people, including women.

The experience would spread to the remaining twelve counties of the Portuguese Timor, if the Indonesian intervention had not caused instability in the night of 10 to 11 August 1975, a few hours after the inauguration of the new elected administration (in this election the candidates of the pro-integration party suffered a heavy defeat).

Also in the area of education, a project to restructure the system had just been implemented. It was approved by the three main political parties (UDT, FRETILIN and APODETI) and counted with the support of the excellent Salesian school of Fatumaca (near Baucau). This project, that caused great interest among almost all the Timorese teachers, was also blocked by the same factors of instability which, in August 1975, pushed the administrative restructure process to an ending.

It did not serve much purpose the alliance established between UDT and FRETILIN, in January 1975. This alliance, which the Governor Lemos Pires considered to be a factor of moderation and stabilisation extremely important for the success of the decolonization process, was broken in May of the same year due to the Indonesian instigation and determinant interference.

Equally of no use was the Macao agreement, between Portuguese and Timorese representatives, and the subsequent approval of the law 7/75 of 17 July 1975 establishing the setting up of a Transitory Government leaded by a High Commissioner to be followed, in October 1976, by elections of an Assembly which would decide the future of East Timor. Indonesia and its allies were prepared to do everything they could to stop the process of decolonization and did not spare any means to create the necessary instability to interrupt and block the ongoing decolonisation, to prevent the setting up of elections and block a genuine act of self-determination.

6 - THE RELATIVE ABANDON OF PORTUGAL AND THE COMPARISON WITH THE POSITION OF SPAIN TOWARDS WESTERN SAHARA

Practically with no support - apart from the ex-Portuguese colonies that had just become the African Countries with Portuguese Official Language (PALOP) - and submitted to a strong pressure of its principal allies, such as the United States and the United Kingdom and the members of the European Economic Community (which Portugal wanted to integrate), Portugal was almost forced to neglect its responsibilities towards East Timor. During many years, and particularly until it entered the European Community (in 1 January 1986), Portugal hardly did anything about East Timor. Yet the few initiatives it took, namely the cut of diplomatic relations with Indonesia the very day of the invasion (7 December 1975) and the presentation of a complaint before the United Nations Security Council, allowed Portugal to maintain the status of Administrative Power of East Timor in a more clear and active manner than Spanish attitude towards Western Sahara. As a matter of fact, Spain, by signing the Madrid Tripartite Agreement with Marroco and Mauritania, abandoned, in practice, the Western Sahara to the Marroco Administration. This agreement, signed in 14 November 1975 by General Franco's non democratic regime (at a time when Franco agonized in hospital), was clearly illegal, for it is not an Administrative Power's prerogative to transfer its obligations and powers to third States when and how it pleases. Yet, and although it was an illegal transfer, it affected the capacity of the Democratic Spain to recover the exercise of its functions as an Administrative Power. The play of economic and political interests both of Marroco and Spain contributed, on the other hand, to make it even more difficult the assumption by Spain of its responsibilities and obligations after the democratisation.

Even more than in the Portuguese case, the position of Spain towards its former colony of Sahara, shows how much the national and international interests speak louder, so often, than the rights and obligations of States in their mutual relations and, most particularly, when they concern weaker, unprotected and dependent people. These realities make us think of the importance of joint actions before governments who support dictatorial regimes.The responsibility of such occupations - and the weakness of the tutor administrations - is, in most of the cases, the result of the pressure of stronger states, the same that, with no punishment, block the UN when it suits them and make it apparently so efficient when it serves their purposes...

7 - FACING ALL INTERESTS AND FORCES INVOLVED, THE ACTORS IN THE FIELD - BOTH TIMORESE AND PORTUGUESE - WERE NOT MUCH MORE THAN MERE FIGURINES

Even today, many are those who accuse Portugal, the decolonisers, the governor Lemos Pires, some Portuguese military of MFA, the Timorese parties or some of its leaders, of being responsible for what happened in East Timor.

Yet, facing so many and diverse interests, in which were involved the United States, the Vatican, Australia, Japan, United Kingdom and other Western powers, there was not much that could have been done.

It should be reminded that the first clear sign of support to the annexation of East Timor was given by the Australian Prime Minister Gough Whitlam when he met with General Suharto in Wonosobo (Indonesia) on 6 to 8 September 1974. At that time FRETILIN did not yet exist, it existed the ASDT (Timorese Social Democratic Association). It was only after the public knowledge of the Australian government position that ASDT was converted in the Revolutionary Front For Independent East Timor (FRETILIN). At that time the Portuguese President was still General Spínola, who would only resign in 28 September 1974.

It is quite obvious that the turning of FRETILIN to a left wing and the fact that it became more radical along with the temporary relevance of the communist party in Portugal were skilfully used by the Indonesian propaganda. In reality, it was only in 11 March 1975 that the communist party assumed a temporary leadership in the Portuguese political scene. Curiously, when the invasion took place in 7 December 1975, the young Portuguese Democracy had already lost, in 25 November of that same year, its left wing tendencies. But even this factor was despised by the Indonesian Government, moved by geostrategic and international interests that were far more determinant than Portugal or Indonesia itself...

Even though FRETILIN did not have any connection what so ever with the Soviet Bloc nor it received any military support from China, the "Antara" agency took charge of adding to declarations of some Timorese leaders's most left wing some false information on the internal situation in Timor and on the international support that would be received by FRETILIN.

This *mise en scène* made credible by the pretense revolutionary language of some Timorese and Portuguese political leaders, helped to increase the panic towards the communist advance in which focused the western concerns.

This panic, that the "hawks" of the Indonesian Government so actively instigated in some of the Timorese leaders (and in some Portuguese who were still in East Timor), adding to the lies made up by the Indonesian secret services and complemented with promises that would soon prove to be absolutely fake, ended up in the *coup d'état* of 10 to 11 August 1975 in Dili, by one of the Timorese parties, with the assault to the radio and other means of communication, and which would lead to an inexorable weakening of the Portuguese authority and would start a short civil war between the Timorese.

In this context, the Indonesian response to the program of Decolonisation approved after the consultation of the Timorese political associations was its total blockage through the direct and indirect instigation to instability in the territory.

When, disposing only of two parachutists platoons (around seventy operational non Timorese soldiers), the Governor Lemos Pires retired to Ataúro, after the Indonesian interference had provoked the *coup d'état* of 10 August and given way to the civil war, the remaining options were either to fall in the hands of one of the Timorese political factions in confront (as it happened to twenty three Portuguese militaries who were kept by the Indonesians as hostages for almost a year) or to accept the Indonesian "protection". As a matter

of fact, the Governor received a message saying that the Indonesian destroyer Mon Icidi was on its way to Dili to offer him "protection"...

With the principal world powers supporting Indonesia and with its manoeuvres to promote instability in the territory in view of the annexation, and denying any support to the only process of decolonisation that supposed an effective democratic consultation to the people of a non autonomous territory under Portuguese administration, both the Governor and the Portuguese and Timorese politicians, had very little space of manoeuvre. In the great theatre of the world geopolitical marionettes, the destiny of East Timor was decided and the actors in the field could not play a more significant role than figurines.

The errors committed by the Portuguese and Timorese politicians induced many people to make accusations and recriminations, inhibitory of any Portuguese reaction to the injustices committed. Adding to this, there was the cynicism of the world powers and the typical cynicism of a dictatorship that managed, not only to commit the crimes but also to convince their victims that they were the guilty ones... In such manner proceeded the Portuguese fascist regime every time there was a demonstration, which would normally involve disturbances and beatings, and whose fault would be attributed to the "irresponsible masses" and to the "agitators of the opposition", when, in fact, the excesses were provoked by the regime's police forces... In such manner proceeded the Soviet propaganda, to convince, not only the Russians but also the Czechoslovaks that the revolution of Prague (in the spring of 1969) was a manoeuvre of dangerous opportunists and exploiters of the people and of immature and irresponsible politicians.

They were far too powerful the forces that framed the entrapment in which Portuguese and Timorese, almost inexorably ended up falling. And it is as victims of the same trap that both need to give hands in order to, in a completely different geopolitical context, make sure that the process interrupted in 1975 will be continued and will lead to a genuine self determination of the East Timor people.

8 - IT WAS BASED IN LIES THAT INDONESIA CREATED THE INSTABILITY AND PREPARED THE INVASION

The Operasi Komodo with which Indonesia fomented the instability in East Timor and prepared the invasion, included in its programme the spreading out of false and alarmist news on the situation of the territory - divulged by Antara Agency- in order to create inside and out of Indonesia, the necessary climax for an anti-communist crusade. It also included the practice of a deceiving seduction, with false promises and wrong information to the political Timorese leaders. It also included, after a certain period, the preparation of an Indonesian military intervention, which had to be disguised and presented as a request for protection from the Portuguese authorities or, in any case, as a request from the Timorese political parties.

With this objective, the Indonesian Government offered "protection" to the Portuguese Governor, who refused, and sought refugee in the island of Atauro, easier to defend with the short means at his disposal. After having failed this attempt, and taking advantage of a visit to Jakarta of a member of the Portuguese Government, the Indonesian Authorities gave him a document with a text that, if signed, would become a formal demanded, by Portugal, for Indonesian military intervention to restore the calm in East Timor which would naturally give freedom of movement to the Indonesian action. The above mentioned member of the Government refused to sign it.

The Timorese leaders who sought protection from the Indonesian side of the frontier, after the short civil war won by FRETILIN, were, on the other hand, forced to sign a request for integration. This request was afterwards reformulated and given the name of "Balibo Declaration" and signed in Bali (not in East Timor), under threats of death made by Indonesian militaries, as some of the subscribers would denounce latter in the United Nations.

And, in order to prepare the way for the Indonesian Foreign Affairs Minister to lie to the World and to his Portuguese homologue, with whom he met in Rome, from 1 to 3 November 1975, promising that Indonesia would not intervene in the decolonization process, and nor press the Timorese people, the foreign journalists who recorded, fifteen days before,, the attack of the Indonesian Forces to the area of Balibo - Maliana on the Portuguese side of the borders, were assassinated.

9 - IN ORDER TO MAKE SURE THAT THOSE LIES WOULD NOT BE EXPOSED, THE INDONESIAN REGIME DID NOT HESITATE TO MURDER ALL THE JOURNALISTS PRESENT IN THE TERRITORY... AND THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE WESTERN POWERS SILENCED THOSE CRIMES...

Had the world public opinion been aware of what was really happening in the territory, it would have been impossible to silence the East Timor issue in the United Nations. The Governments of the democratic countries would have had to face the criticism of the public opinion and would have had serious difficulties in supporting the Indonesian annexionist policy.

Instead, the murder in Balibo by the regular forces of the Indonesian Army, on 16 October 1975, of five journalists, two Australians, two British and one New Zealander, was accepted by the Governments of these countries without a single formal protest.

The newsmen were recording the attack, from the shed of a house in whose external wall they had drawn previously the Australian flag as a precaution.

It was of no use to show the cameras and the flag. It was precisely because they were identified as journalists that they were then coldly eliminated.

In order to justify their deaths, the Indonesian soldiers put them in Portuguese military uniforms and set up a scenery with the journalists standing near machine guns. But the photos may have turn out very little convincing because they were never used internationally.

Five journalists were murdered:

- two Australians:
  - Greg Shackleton, 27 years old, and
  - Tony Stewart, 21 years;
- two British:
  - Malcom Renie, 28 years old, and
  - Brian Peters, 29 years old;
- one New-Zealander:
  - Gary Cunningham, 27 years old.

The images they recorded would have dismantled the Indonesian propaganda that presented the conflict as a civil war among Timorese factions.

Maybe those images, if seen in Australia and other countries, would have made some governments withdraw their support to Indonesia. Perhaps, those images would have even been sufficient to prevent the holocaust to come.

Not long before this event (in 14 October) the American CIA informed the principal American officers that *"Indonesian Units are to attack the town of Maliana. The troops participating in the operation will wear uniforms without insignia and are to carry older, soviet-made weapons so as not to be identified as Indonesian regulars"*. (7)

In the same day of the murder, through the interception of radio-communications between different Indonesian military divisions, the Australian, British and American intelligence services were informed that the journalists had been expressly murdered by the Indonesian militaries due precisely to the fact that they were journalists and that they were recording the attack, in which participated a war vessel, an helicopter and Indonesian heavy artillery. These governments pretended to believe in the Indonesian version that sustained the idea that the deaths were caused by accident during the cross fire between the different Timorese factions...

The Australian Ambassador in Jakarta, Woolcot, was quite clear in a telegram that some days afterwards he sent to his Government:

"Although we know it is not true, the formal position of the Indonesian government is still that there is no Indonesian military intervention in East Timor. If the Minister said or implied in public the Indonesian Government was lying we could invite a hurt and angry reaction". (8)

And because the invasion of East Timor was also an Australian invasion, this is, on the Australian interest, the Camberra government, respected the suggestion of its Ambassador, and pretended to believe in the Indonesian version of the facts. A similar behaviour had the British, American and New Zealander (among others) governments.

In 7 December there was still a last foreign journalist in East Timor, the Australian Roger East. He was captured by the Indonesian forces when he was trying to send a desperate message to the world about the invasion he was witnessing, he was shot on that same day...once again there was no formal protest...

With the connivance of the Australian, British and other governments, a stone of silence was put on East Timor.

During several years, almost only the African Countries of Portuguese Official Language (PALOP) were concerned with the denounce of the dramatic situation lived in the territory and with the international defense of the Maubere People right to self-determination.

10 - IN ORDER TO ASSURE A COMPLETE SILENCE, ALSO THE INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES WERE FORBIDDEN TO ENTER IN THE TERRITORY

As if the murders of all the foreign journalists weren't enough, and to avoid more witnesses, during the following three years the Indonesian occupation authorities hindered, entirely, the entering in the territory of any International Humanitarian Help Agencies. Only on March 24, 1979, had, the International Committee of the Red Cross, ICRC, its authorization conceded to enter in the territory. Though the authorization was only granted for a few weeks and in despite of the several obstacles put to their action, the ICRC could still notice that the situation was of an extreme misery and hunger with thousands of people "dislocated" and "re-located" in veritable concentration camps.

When, in April of 1979, the International Red Cross opened inscriptions, in Dili, to inquire on who would like to be repatriated to Portugal, the affluence was so intense, that they had to cancel the initiative only two days after it started. The problem was that in those two days, seventeen thousand people had made the inscription, wishing to leave rapidly the hell that East Timor had become!

The violence affected almost everyone, directly or through the destruction of hundreds of villages, constant brain washing and the dissolution of the social and cultural life.

According to 1979 statistics of the East Timor Regional Government, created by the occupiers, the number of the livestock in East Timor was reduced to one tenth of the existing before the invasion.

The agriculture was almost entirely destroyed by the bombings effectuated with planes furnished by the United States of America (the famous Bronco OV - 10F, produced by the Rockwell International) and with other martial equipment supplied by several Western Powers.

In October 1980, the Red Cross ICRC finally managed to get the Indonesian permit to remain in the territory.

In despite of this agreement, this international agency was expelled once again, during the great military operations in 1981, for which almost all the Timorese masculine population, from 15 to 55, was mobilized to serve as a shield for the Indonesian soldiers in their fight against FRETILIN. It was only in 20 December 1981 (six years after the invasion) that ICRC was once more given the permit to remain in the territory. (10) (11)

11 - WITH THE HELP OF THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT WHO CAPTURED THE ONLY RETRANSMISSION RADIO THAT, FROM THE NORTHERN TERRITORY, COMMUNICATED WITH THE TIMORESE, RESISTANCE, THE INFORMATIon BLACK OUT WAS ALMOST COMPLETE DURING THIRTEEN LONG YEARS

With no newsmen in the field, without the inconvenient testimony of the International Committee of the Red Cross and of other human rights agencies and organizations, with an almost total blockage of the frontiers for thirteen years and with a strict censorship of the mail and of the rare and difficult telephone connections, East Timor was for more than ten years a veritable concentration camp.

With great effort and risk, the Resistance managed to maintain, during long periods of time, the Maubere Radio as the only, direct and almost daily, means of communication. From the bush near Darwin, Australia, some Timorese and Australians received the Timorese news and appeals, and transmitted information on what was happening abroad. The Australian Government, so inefficient in the disclosure of the murder of the newsman in East Timor, became efficient in the apprehension of those involved in broadcasting from Darwin. After this arrest, in 29 September 1976, the reports coming from this huge concentration camp in wich East Timor was transformed were seriously affcted.

The rare information that managed to get off Timor, came via letters and reports from catholic missionaries, occasionally by a few Timorese who through bribery, managed to escape from the territory, or from the very rare visitors allowed by the Indonesian Government into the island for short "guided tours" . Curiously, when, at the end of 1984, the Indonesian Foreign Affairs Minister, Mochtar Kusumaatdja, announced a decision authorizing the visit of some people, recommended by the diplomatic missions accredited to Jakarta, to the so called "27th province of Indonesia", he explained that such authorizations could be granted *"provided the Indonesian Government considers that the visit would be in Indonesian's interests"*. (12) (Tapol nº66 Nov. 1983)

It was only in November 1988, thirteen years after the beginning of the invasion, that General Suharto, the President of Indonesia, declared that eight of the thirteen East Timorese circumscriptions would be, from then on, open to the free access of Indonesians and foreigners. However, the restrictions were maintained to the journalists and human rights organizations and particularly in the periods of stronger repression, when such presence was obviously mostly needed.

During thirteen years the information black out imposed in East Timor by the Indonesian forces was almost complete!

12 - WITH NO INFORMATION ON THE MEDIA, THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE OCCUPYING POWERS AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVES COULD LIE FREELY.

As much as possible, a part of the press , not only Portuguese but also Australian, even American and from other countries, was eventually broadcasting some information on what was going on in East Timor. Yet, the lack of images, the delay with which the information got outside the island, and the absence of complementary journalistic investigation, prevented systematically the reports to have any impact.

In the middle of the general silence, it was easy for the world political leaders of the governments that supported, diplomatically and materially, the Indonesian occupation - (which could, therefore, be also considered as occupying powers through Indonesia) - to hide and twist the truth from their citizens and electors.

Let's go through some examples :

Example nr 1 :

In a message dated 29 October 1975, sent by the Australian Ambassador in Jakarta, Richard Woolcott, to the Foreign Affairs Minister in Camberra, he was underlying the necessity of keeping good relations between Australia and Indonesia. In the name of those good relations, the Ambassador stated in that message, which would end up being publicized in May 1976 by the Camberra Times:

"Although we know it is not true, the formal position of the Indonesian government is still that there is no Indonesian military intervention in East Timor. If the Minister said or implied in public the Indonesian Government was lying we could invite a hurt and angry reaction".

In order to avoid such reaction - and because the military intervention was seen by the Australian Government as capable of bringing political and economical benefits, the Minister took the Ambassador's advice, and pretended to believe the Indonesian version of the events.

In February 1978 the journalist Laurie Oakes stated that the Australian Defense Signals Division intercepted the radio messages relating to the murder of the five journalists in Balibo which confirmed that it had been a deliberated action of the Indonesian Army.

Nevertheless, in reply to the requests for an inquiry on these killings, the Australian Government reaffirmed not to have any knowledge both on any Indonesian incursion near the border and on the circumstances involving the death of the newsmen (Arnold Kohen and John Taylor, 1979, p.31). (13)

Curiously, a similar convenient ignorance was assumed by the British Government when the 28th of October 1975, Lord Brockway adressed aquestion in the British Parliament, *"To ask Her Majesty's government whether, in view of reports that Indonesian military personnel have invaded Timor, they asked the United Nations Security Council to consider this threat to peace and security and to take the necessary action", t*the Parliamentary Under-secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth office (Lord Garonwy-Roberts) replied that *"in the absence of any British representation in the area, Her Majesty's Government have no independent means of verifying the reports that the noble lord has mentioned ...""*

And this position was kept even when lord Brockway insisted *"that there has been evidence for a fortnight now that Indonesian troops have been in Timor and that Indonesian*

naval vessels have stromed the territory". And added, questioning: *"Is it not fact that yesterday the official news agency in Jakarta acknowledged the Indonesian troops were engaged six miles within Timor and, if this is the case, surely it is a matter in which the United Nations Security Council should intervene?."*

In 13 November 1975, the London Guardian, even with little investigation could inform that according to their sources in the Indonesian capital, regular unites of the Indonesian Army penetrated Portuguese Timor, some weeks before, and were practically responsible for all the combats that were presented to the world as a counter attack "of the Timorese freedom fighters"

In spite of this, when, in 1976, the British Parliament arose the problem of the deaths of the five journalists in Balibo, the then State Secretary, David Ennals, affirmed that the journalists would have probably been killed when the house where they took refugy, together with FRETILIN forces, was hit by the fire of UDT and APODETI.

Exemple nr 2

On 30 March 1977, the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Adam Malik, admitted himself, in the presence of foreign journalists in Jakarta, that " *Fifty thousand people or perhaps eighty thousand might have been killed during the war in Timor...It was war... Then what is the big fuss?". (13)*

This number contradicted immensely with the number of two to three thousand dead referred generally by the members of the American Admnistration, who admitted then that the total numbers could be of ten thousand at maximum.

Facing this contradiction, the Washington correspondent of the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) tried to obtain a comment from the U.S. State Departement. He had to wait for more than 24 hours, until he was finally informed that they hadn't been able to get the confirmation that the Indonesian Foreign Affairs Ministry had made such statement in Jakarta. " *But, if it is true that Malik said so, he is wrong".*

Example nr 3

In 23 March 1977, the former Australian Consul in Dili, James Dunn, gave his testimony of the Indonesian atrocities in East Timor before the United States Congress to which he handed in a report based on interviews to East Timorese refugees that he had previously made in Lisbon.

Reacting to his testimony, the spokes person for the American Department of State, confessing though that the Department had never tried to inquire any Timorese, proclaimed that the reports on the atrocities committed by the Indonesians had been "immensely exaggerated". And concluded that "*it is of no use*" to put into stake the Indonesian statements on East Timor (according to which the situation was almost normal)

Example nr 4

Answering to questions put by the editor of a British newspaper, Mr. Paul M. Cleveland, Acting Director of the Office of Regional Affairs, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, stated in a letter dated 5 January 1979 :

(...) " *The United States Government has followed the situation in East Timor with great concern. The recent history of the territory has included precipitate Portuguese withdrawal , fratricidal warfare, and the Indonesian armed intervention. However, as the incorporation of East Timor into Indonesian is now an accomplished fact, it is our view - shared by many other governments - that efforts should be directed toward ensuring that the*

people of East Timor receive humanitarian and economic aid from the Indonesian Government, international organizations, and other sources, in order to overcome the dire poverty in which most of them live" .

"We have made certain that the US Government's position on East Timor is clearly understood by the government of Indonesia and are gratified by that Government's decision to grant greater access to international humanitarian organizations. The Australian and New Zealand Red Cross societies, working with the Indonesian Red Cross, have already begun providing assistance.(...)

"Recent visitors to East Timor including our Ambassador, inform us that the Indonesian Government appears to be taking very seriously its role in providing political stability and improving the living conditions of the people. Extensive efforts are underway to resettle the thousands of persons who have sought protection in the area controlled by the Indonesian Government. Other activities suggest that humanitarian and economic assistance programs now enjoy the highest priority of the Jakarta Government.

"In marked contrast to the efforts by the Government of Indonesia to easty (sic) the plight of the impoverished people of East Timor, I should point out that President Carter has termed the abuse of the human rights in Kampuchea (Cambodia) to be "the worst in the world". Consequently, we have been unwilling to seek relations with , much less "support" the Kampuchean Government.". (14), (15)

Noam Chomsky, who quotes this letter in a conference in May 1979, published with the title - *East Timor and the Western Democracies* - comments the cynicism of the expressions used. (p.6):

"Massacres and brutal atrocities have been converted into "efforts to ease the plight of impoverished people "; the miserable remnants who flee the rubble of their devastated villages and their defoliated fields are "seeking protection in the areas controlled by the Indonesian Government", which is showing such notable concern for its impoverished charges -- impoverished by whom, the author does not say."

And, he continues, *""The reference to the International Red Cross perhaps deserves special mention. A year ago, the leading liberal representative of the US Government, Vice -President Mondale, journeyed through Asia to spread the gospel of the human rights, consulting with such outstanding practitioners as Marcos and Suharto. While visiting Jakarta, he found himself so impressed with the magnificent human rights performance of his hosts that he telephoned Washington , on his personal initiative, to urge that Indonesia be provided with A-4 attack bombers, in recognition of their achievements in the human rights domain -- a great contribution to enhancing the human rights of the people of Timor. Apparently there was a condition : Indonesia was to permit the International Red Cross to operate in East Timor. Many months later, the State Department expresses its "hope" that Indonesia , in its zeal to ease the plight of the unfortunates for whom it has taken responsibility, will allow the International Red Cross to assist in its humanitarians efforts. Meanwhile the US and its allies continue to supply arms to the Indonesians forces so that they can convince other impoverished people to seek Indonesian "protection" so that they too can benefit from the ministrations of the human rights crusaders in Jakarta , whose efforts so impress their counterparts in Washington."*

One year after this statement, in May 1980, the Newsman Brian Ads, from Jakarta affirmed *"The hunger and diseases are even more spread than in the ruined Cambodia, but the people of East Timor still fights tenaciously for its life"* (Observer, 2.5.80). (cited by Noam Chomski, (15))

In May 1982, the American journalist Rod Nordland was given permission, by the Indonesian authorities to, exceptionally, remain eleven days in East Timor. His report,

published the 28 of May 1982 in *"The Philadelphia Inquirer"* is a clear denounce of the official American and Indonesian version on the situation, and also contradicts the description presented on Mr. M. Cleveland's letter of 5 January 1979 that we mentioned previously.

According to him" *East Timor, the former Portuguese Colony which had been annexed to Indonesia by force in 1976, is a land where sub-nutrition and hunger became general (...) There are thousands of political prisoners (...) Even if many of the Timorese interviewed showed a clear fright to talk, some of them did yet talk, there was namely one who stated:*

«Please, tell the world to help the Timorese people»

"We were later informed that at least six of the interviewed, were conducted afterwards to the general headquarters of the Secret Military Services and questioned for hours on what they had said during our inquiry. (...).

"Virtually, there are no civil rights in East Timor. The Indonesians tell the farmers to whom they must sell their coffee and at what price. No one can leave their villages or the place of their residence without permission. Telephone calls or telegrams out of Timor are forbidden. No one can leave the province without a special permission, which is rarely granted." (...) (Re-translated from Portuguese version)

Rod Nordland, a prestigious American newsman who had just received the Pulitzer Prize, received the Polk Prize after this report which became one of the first independent descriptions published in the American press after the invasion.

13 - WITH THE PUBLIC OPINION ASLEEP, EVEN THE MEDIA LOST INTEREST IN THE QUESTION : - EAST TIMOR, NO ONE EVEN KNOWS WHERE THAT IS...EAST TIMOR DOES NOT SELL...EAST TIMOR IS NOT NEWS...

Rod Nordland's article is an exception. The information black out imposed by the occupying forces had as a consequence the almost complete absence of information in the world media, during several years.

The American professor Noam Chomsky, tells us (op cit p.7) that when the agency France-Presse was invited to a press conference in the United Nations, called to discuss the situation in East Timor, it declined the invitation on the grounds that people in Paris were not interested in East Timor.

And Chomsky clarifies:

" An indication of this lack of interest was provided only a few weeks earlier, when the French Foreign Minister visited Jakarta. In an interview published in Le Monde, *he described the achievement of his visit : new arms sales to Indonesia, plans for co-production of armament, etc. Asked about France's attitude towards iIdonesians exploits in Timor, the Foreign Minister brushed the issue aside, commenting merely that France would do nothing to embarrass its Indonesian friends, who afford it such excellent economic opportunities."*

In another essay, written in 1982 ("The United States and East Timor" Ed. Madragora, published in January 1986) Chomsky recalls what happened between him and the Columbia Journalism Review:

"In February 1979,a leading American review of journalism, which prides itself on its critical analysis of the shortcomings of the press, asked me to submit an article on news coverage of tpostwar Indochina. I suggested instead an article on Timor, urging that the importance was far greater, for the obvious reasons that I have already mentioned. After some negotiation, they finally refused, on the following grounds : since virtually no one had heard of

Timor, there would be no interest in such an article. So the circle is complete. First, the" free press" suppresses vital information in the service of the state; and then, no discussion of this suppression can take place because it has been so effective that no one has heard of the topic." (14)

14 - THE COURAGE AND THE INTELLIGENCE OF SOME NEWSMAN PREVENTED THE SANTA CRUZ MASSACRE TO BE ANOTHER IGNORED AND FORGOTTEN MASSACRE.

Despite the efficiency of the American diplomacy to silence the case in the United Nations, several resolutions condemning the Indonesian occupation were approved, both by the General Assembly and by the Security Council.

The resolution approved by the United Nations General Assembly in 1982, points out the necessity of the establishment of talks between the parties under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary General.

Following some years of inconclusive talks, it was considered the possibility of sending a Portuguese Parliamentarian delegation to the territory.

Taking into account the expectations created among the Timorese people by the announcement of such visit, the Indonesian authorities decided to disrespect one of the agreed points in order to boycot the visit, some days before it would supposedly take place.

However, many Timorese had already prepared strong demonstrations, asking for the self determination of East Timor and for protection against the Indonesian occupation.

Several newsmen had also already entered East Timor disguised as tourists in order to follow the events.

The news that the Portuguese parliamentary delegation would not be able to go to Timor caused great consternation among the Timorese.

Among the Indonesian military leaders, a feeling of relief was mixed with one of humiliation at not having been able to stage a performance showing the acceptance of the status quo by the Timorese. In order to gain revenge for this humiliation and to avenge the uselessness of thousands of meetings throughout East Timor in which the Indonesian military personnel had attempted to instruct the population about how they should behave during the visit and had threatened them with death if they did not follow these instructions carefully, the Indonesian forces in Timor began to behave in a most threatening and provocative manner.

For the first time in sixteen years, it was in a church that a young Timorese was killed. Many young people who had been threatened with death by Indonesian forces took refuge in the Church of St.Antonio de Motael on the night of 27 October 1991. The bells were tolled, in the hope that the soldiers surrounding the church might be induced to contain their violent instincts in front of so many witnesses. But the Indonesian troops did not hesitate to enter the church and shoot the eighteen-year-old student Sebastião Gomes Rangel. Accidentally a second Timorese called Afonso Henriques, aged 29 was killed. Several dozen young people were arrested. In the following days other churches in Timor were attacked, and many houses were searched, not only in Dili but also in other areas such as Lospalos, Viqueque, Fatumaca and Manatuto, and many Timorese, especially young people, were arrested and tortured. In the raids, houses were searched and people were beaten, to the point that many broken bones or vomited blood. Some times the Indonesian soldiers even stole rosaries.

Two weeks later, after a memorial mass for the soul of Sebastião Gomes, thousands of Timorese went to the cemetery to pay him their last homage. On the road other Timorese joined the cortege - young people, women, elderly people, children. Little by little, flags and

posters of the Resistance began to appear. Several Journalists who had gone to East Timor, almost all disguised as tourists so that the Indonesian authorities would not prevent them from entering, were in Dili at the time. The young Timorese wanted to take advantage of their presence in order to demonstrate in a peaceful fashion their desire to be free of Indonesian occupation and to achieve self-determination. Shortly after they reached the Cemetery of Santa Cruz, trucks loaded with Indonesian soldiers arrived. In a calm and disciplined form, they lined up, with their weapons at the ready.

Two American journalists, Alan Nairn *(The New Yorker)* and Amy Goodman (of Radio WBAI in New York) fearing the worst, stood between the crowd and the Indonesian soldiers, showing their cameras and tape recorders in the hope that the presence of foreign journalists might dissuade them from violence. They were wrong. Obeying orders from their commander, the soldiers began to fire upon the crowd. The two journalists, along with other journalists who were present, bear witness to the fact that there had been no violent attitudes from the demonstrators,who were totally unarmed.There was no order to disperse nor any warning from the Indonesian soldiers. For some minutes M16 machine guns sprayed the defenseless crowd. After reloading, firing began once again. Many Timorese fled, or hid behind the tombstones. Others had no time to do so and were wounded or killed. The American journalists were mistreated in barbaric fashion. They were probably saved due to the fact that they shouted that they were Americans. Other journalists were arrested and beaten, and their films and manuscripts confiscated.

After the massacre, the Indonesian soldiers cleaned the terrain quickly. Corpses were loaded in trucks and taken to mass graves. Others, still wounded, were shot or bayoneted. Other wounded persons were taken to the hospital, from which they were sent to prison... or to mass graves.

The names of the dead, wounded and arrested were not communicated to their families. Prevented from seeing the corpses in order to identify them, prevented from giving children Christian burials, prevented from visiting the wounded in the hospital or those arrested in prison, Timorese families lived in anguish and doubt. Even the International Red Cross was prevented for fifteen days from visiting the hospital because the wounded had to be interrogated first.

Several witnesses speak of two to three hundred dead, most of whom were taken in Indonesian Army trucks to mass graves. In spite of the speed with which the Indonesian Army cleaned up the terrain, when the Italian priest Stefani Renato passed by the place three hours later, he still saw a great deal of blood on the street in front of the Cementery and in the surrounding areas.

According to the Australian journalist Antony Balmain, three days later, on 15 November, nearly sixty-eight prisoners were taken in four Army trucks to Bé-Musi, near Dili, where they were shot.

Ten witnesses of this second massacre were killed two days later. And as there were witnesses of the third wave of murders, on 18 November seven more persons were killed, including a four year-old child and one one year-old baby.

Most of the dead were students under twenty years of age, educated under the Indonesian occupation. A young New Zealander of Malay origin, Kamal Bamadhaj, a student in his last year at New South Wales University in Australia, died with them. Nearly all the Timorese who were arrested underwent severe torture.

On the day after the massacre, General Try Sutrismo, Commader in Chief of the Indonesian Armed Forces (ABRI), in a meeting of Lemhanas Graduates (of the National Defense Institute) justified the massacre saying :

"They are people who must be crushed.. This scum must be eliminated...come what may, they cannot ignore ABRI(the Indonesian Armed Forces)...ABRI is determinated to eliminate anyone who creates disturbances".

Meanwhile, a group of Timorese living in Jakarta organized a demonstration on 19 November in front of the UN Information Center. Many Indonesians supported them, but the demonstration was dispersed and approximately thirty-five Timorese students were arrested and, in many cases, tortured.

Thousands of Indonesian students, manifesting their shock and disgust at the Dili massacre and showing their solidarity with the Timorese, demonstrated in several universities.

The statements of the two American journalists, of the British journalist Steve Cox *(The Independent)* and the Australian journalists Russel Anderson and Bob Muntz, and also of the Italian priest Stefani Renato, and especially the images that British journalist Max Stahl (Yorkshire Television) managed to smuggle out of the country, awaked the world from its apathy and were responsible for alerting many people to the alarming situation in East Timor. In Portugal, Australia and other countries, many demonstrations and protests took place.

The United States Senate approved a resolution on 21 November which states, *"the President should support the immediate introduction of a resolution in the General Assembly instructing the United Nations Commission on Human Rights to appoint a Special Rapporteur for East Timor to assist in the resolution of the East Timorese conflict in pursuit of the right of self -determinAation of the East Timorese People."* A letter signed by 52 of the 100 members of the Senate expressed to the president Bush concern regarding the situation in East Timor. In it, the Senators request that American authorities give the matter greater attention and intervene more actively.

Holland, Canada and Denmark cut off aid to Indonesia. The Australian Council of Trade Unions organized boycotts in ports and airports, and supported the creation of the symbolic "embassy" of East Timor in Canberra, just a few meters away from the Indonesian Embassy. The Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gareth Evans, threatened to have the Timorese and Australian demonstrators removed by force, but divisions existed among the Canberra authorities.

General Suharto confronted to the pressure of the international public opinion, was forced to appoint a Committee of Inquiry. This Committee was made up of military officers and public servants, with only one Member of Parliament, and was headed by a retired general inplicated in the repression against those who had opposed the regime.

In the first version of its report, the Committee--which heard almost no direct witnesses of the massacre--claimed that nineteen Timorese died. This is the same amount as the graves opened by the Army, and was designed to give credibility to this number.

Due to the statement of the foreign journalists who witnessed the massacre (an even of members of the Regional Assembly created by the occupiers) which indicated much higher numbers (more than 270), the falsity of the report became increasingly obvious.

Australia and other countries, in order to hush the international clamor, brought pressure to bear on the Indonesian government to produce a more credible report. Finally, the Committee of Inquiry spoke of fifty deaths and condemned the behavior of the Indonesian troops. The Military Commander of East Timor, Brigadier General Rudolf Warouw, and the Commander of the Military Region of the Sonda Islands, located in Bali, Major General Sintong Panjaitan, were removed from their posts and transferred. Battalion 303 of Jakarta and 700 of Sulawesi, which were involved in the massacres, returned to their barracks.

In spite of the contradictions and lies contained in the final version of the report of the Committee of Inquiry, the Governments of Australia, Japan and the United States greeted it as enough to warrant continued cooperation with Indonesia, although a certain pressure would be kept up so that the regime would investigate the matter more thoroughly.

Behind remained many other Massacres, of similar proportions - if not worse than the Santa Cruz Massacre - such as those in *Kraras*, in August 1983, in the mount of *Santo António*, in *Lacluta*, in September 1981, and the air raids that, with the help of the Bronco OV-10 furnished by the USA, were made in 1977, 1978 and 1979, im the Mount Mate Bian and in many other places throughout the territory.

Thanks to the courage and intelligence of some newsmen, the Santa Cruz Massacre did not pass unnoticed. It was registered in history and helped to wake up a significant part of the public world opinion to the reality of an occupation of immense cruelty.

15 - TO REPORT WHAT GOES ON IN EAST TIMOR AND TO DEMAND RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE GOVERNMENTS FOR THE MURDER OF THE JOURNALISTS, THE SALES OF ARMS AND THE POLITICAL COVERAGE THEY GIVE TO THE OCCUPYING POWER ARE SOME OF THE WAYS TO DEFEND NOT ONLY THE TIMORESE BUT ALSO FREEDOM ITSELF AND THE INTERNATIONAL LAW

In October 1981 a catholic missionary, after describing the deportations to the prison-island of *Atauro* and the ongoing extermination of the Timorese, described the Indonesian occupiers:

" There are two things which are very true: they are teople capable of Genocide...they just fear one thing: the universal public condemnation..."

As a matter of fact, if the truth about what was going on in East Timor was revealed, it would have been impossible to the more implicated governments, to silence the revolt of their public opinions and to maintain for so many years their support to a genocidal occupation so contrary to international law as it was the Indonesian occupation in East Timor.

In Indonesia, the control of the press by Suharto's dictatorship made the occupation to look like a fraternal solidarity towards a neighbor in trouble. It is very typical of totalitarian regimes.

But also the so called free and democratic countries, where the freedom of the press is legally guaranteed, silence and lies were the motto of the governments and their representatives. Their involvement in the occupation was such that they accepted to cover up the murder of their own citizens, the six journalists, without a single formal protest.

From the American side not only the real situation in East Timor but also the illegal use of American armament in the invasion and occupation were concealed from the public opinion. Curiously, the invasion began, in 7 December 1975, a few hours after the President Gerald Ford and his State Secretary, Henry Kissinger participated in a conference in Jakarta along with General Suharto. Curiously also between 1974 and 1975 the United States increased in 450% the supply of martial equipment to Indonesia and it were American Rockwell Bronco OV-10 that permitted the Indonesian militaries to perform such successful air raids in East Timor.

In the United Nations the role of the United States, United Kingdom, Australia and other countries was to minimize and silence the question, outraging the basic principles of international law that later they would invoke to justify the international intervention in Kuwait.

Some few years after the invasion, the American Ambassador in the United Nations affirmed in public that the main incumbency assigned to him by the USA Government was to make sure that the United Nations would be inoperative in the case of East Timor, and he recognised his success

This is exactly what can be read in the Memories of Daniel Patrick Moynihan who was the USA Ambassador in the United Nations in the critical seventies:

"...the United States wished things to turn out as they did, and worked to bring this about. The Department of State desired that the United Nations prove utterly ineffective in whatever measures it undertook. The task was given to me, and I carried forward with no inconsiderable success" .

As a matter of fact, in the name of the preservation of freedom and of the principles that rule the Western Democratic States, these States ignored the principles and the UN Resolutions that in their own territory they clearly defend.

From this silence, lies and criminal complicity resulted a genocide proportionally worse than the Nazi holocaust.

While we assisted to just appeals against the extinction of some species, we let a wall of silence crush a whole people that was deprived of its culture and exterminated...

To prevent such sad history from repeating, it is fundamental to publicize what happened and still happens in East Timor. And, to ensure that the freedom of press is respected, and that the lives of the mass media professionals will not again be put in danger, it is vital to make a consistent inquiry to the deaths of the journalists in East Timor and to judge the liable people.

To demand the opening of the territory of East Timor - namely to newsmen, international human rights organizations and credible personalities - and to investigate and report what goes on in East Timor, is maybe, the best way to stop the physical and psychological genocide of its people.

To clear up each Government's responsibility in their direct or indirect cooperation with the murders of the journalists, to hold them responsible for their arms supplies to Indonesia and for the covering up they gave to the occupying power,would be a positive contribute to the defense of the martyred people of East Timor and to contribute to a more just, peaceful and democratic world.

Oporto, 1 May 1996

António Barbedo de Magalhães.

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